

SONG: Who Is on the Lord's Side?; Higher Ground (I am pressing on the upper way); My Father Planned It All (What tho' the way be lonely) CLOSE: He is Able to Deliver Thee ('Tis the grandest theme thru the ages rung)

## Jericho

### Joshua Series: 8 of 18

#### TEXT: Joshua 6

**AIM: To show that the mark of the true believer from the time of Abraham, like those today who are going to live and work for God – is Faith in God & Obedience to His Word!**

#### REVIEW

The title of our last message in this series was a *"New Beginning."* So before we precede any further, it would do us good to review what we have covered to this point.

**Chapter 1** – God rehearsed with Joshua & Israel provisions He gave for victory & possession of the land. Then he enumerated the conditions that were required of them to meet for victory to actually be achieved.

**Chapter 2** – Rahab – She hid two spies. Because of her help and her faith in the God of Israel, these men promised her & her family would be spared in the attack.

**Chapter 3** – The crossing of the Jordan River – Spiritual type of Death to self.

There was a three-day waiting period:

—**Wait of Testing.** God tried their faith.

—**Words of Instruction.** Needed procedures were required in crossing over.

—**Walk of Faith.** Exercised as they crossed the flooded Jordan River.

**Chapter 4** – Setting up of 2 monuments of 12 stones each:

—One was *in* the Jordan & another *on* the Bank of Gilgal.

—Typically those two pillars of stone have an application of the N.T. Church.

- 12 stones in water picture baptism and

- 12 stones at Gilgal, which was the place of fellowship, communion and refreshment. The 12 stones, at Gilgal pictures the Lord's Supper.

**Chapter 5** – The New Beginning

The monuments are in place, BUT before they can proceed and conquer the land there are some things that must first be put in order. There were two things not observed by Israel for 40 years.

—**Re-institution of Circumcision** – pictures the crucifixion of the flesh.

—**Re-institution the Passover** – pictures communion/fellowship with Lord Jesus Christ.

—**Revealing of the Captain of the Host** – The Lord Jesus appears to assume the command of the army. At his point, all Joshua needed to do was submit to our Lord's leadership and follow His orders.

**NOW in chapter 6, Israel is ready to begin and advance to conquer the land God has promised them. As they advance, we must always remember, in the book of Joshua, we are not just observing the history of Israel, but we are to realise that God has some deep spiritual truths He intends for us to see and from which to prosper.**

- In the possessing of the land of Canaan, there is a PICTURE and TYPE of the believer possessing that spiritual maturity and blessing, which God says, is our inheritance.
- Just as there were enemies to overcome in the land of Canaan, there are also spiritual enemies that stand in our path, which must be overcome if we are to receive the blessings, which God says, are ours.

***Let's consider THE PATTERN OF DIVINE CONQUEST:***

Evidently God used geographical factors to aid Israel in taking the land. From their camp in Gilgal near the Jordan River, the Israelites could see the steep hills to the west. After crossing the Jordan the first city of Canaan to be conquered is found in *Joshua 6:1 – Jericho*.

Jericho was a walled city in the midst of a vast grove of palm trees. Its site was about 5 miles west of Jordan. **It was the MOST IMPORTANT city in the Jordan valley, and the strongest fortress in all the land of Canaan. It was the KEY to Western Palestine.** With Israel's crossing of the Jordan, the city of Jericho effectively was cut off from the outside world. The mountains were behind Jericho's residents and the army of Israel before them.

**They were SHUT-UP, SECURED by a blockade, and SCARED!**

**Joshua 5:1** reveals they were so terrified that their hearts melted with fear AND they had no desire to do battle. Their ONLY security was the strength of the cities walls. These folks were between "a rock and a hard place." They were losers! Sooner or later they would have to try to get out for food or they would die, but when they did, surely they were dead!

Jericho controlled the way west and was right in the passage of ascent into the mountains. Ai was another fortress-city, a little further west that stood at the foot of the ascent to these mountains. Joshua's conquest of Canaan was to be accomplished by three military campaigns—central, southern, and northern. The central campaign was designed to divide and conquer the land and consisted of two major engagements, one at Jericho and the other at Ai. If Israel were to capture the hill country and divide the land, they **MUST** certainly take Jericho and Ai.

By so doing, this would put Israel on top of the hill country and in control of the central ridge—effectively driving a wedge between the northern and southern sections of the Canaan. Israel could then engage the armies of the south in battle, before hitting the more remote enemy in the north. **BUT FIRST**, Jericho must fall – and it will, **IF** Israel follows their Captain's (i.e. the Lord's) plan of action.

#### **Let's consider THE PROPRIETY OF DIVINE JUDGEMENT:**

What I mean by "propriety" is the righteous appropriateness of God's punishment. There could be **NO** compromise with the people of Jericho; **NO** peace treaty was to be made with the enemies of the true God, **ONLY** total annihilation. The city must fall and those in it had to be destroyed. There was to be **NO** co-habitation, no co-existence!

In case you have a bleeding heart for those poor, peace loving and kind people in Canaan because they had to give up their land to Israel, **TURN>> Deut. 18:9-14.**

- In Essence, God was using Israel as His **rod** and means of judging an ungodly and wicked people.
- It must be remembered that God has the right to bring judgement on sinful individuals or nations at any time.
- Is their any evidence that the Canaanites were willing to give up their iniquities? **NO there wasn't!**
- The Canaanites were immoral, idolatrous, and base people who were hell bent on destruction.

**If Israel was infected with their degenerate practices of religious prostitution and infant sacrifice, how would it be possible for a pure faith to remain or how could they be channels of blessing to the world?**

The battle—that Israel is about to fight with Jericho—likened to the battle that you and I fight every day. There are Jericho's in our path—as there was a Jericho in Israel's path. Events, people, and circumstances that stand in opposition to our walk with God —All of which can be overcome by our obedient faith in the God of victory.

***I want us to notice 4 things in this chapter:***

1. The Opposing Occupants.
2. The Occupants Over-thrown.
3. The Ominous Orders – i.e. Unfavourable or threatening orders that God gives Israel regarding Jericho's conquest.
4. The Obedient Occupant

**I. THE OPPOSING OCCUPANTS**

**A. *It was Essential for Israel to Conquer Jericho!***

1. Jericho was a BLOCKAGE to Israel's progress into the land.
2. If they were to take THEIR land of inheritance that God promised them, Israel had to overcome their fortifications and defeat each enemy that occupied the land as God instructed them.
3. **NO enemy position was to be avoided as being too difficult.**  
It just could not be walked around.
4. **NO enemy position was to be avoided because it appeared to be insignificant.**  
I.e. not worth the effort.
5. Israel wasn't to by pass the difficult Jericho in order to take the easier city of Ai.
6. Israel didn't need any enemy attacking from behind! —It would have been absolutely foolish to fight the enemy on two fronts when it was in their power to only fight on one!

**B. *It is ESSENTIAL for US to Annihilate OUR Jerichos for they will hinder us from becoming mature and steadfast in our faith. They will, without doubt, prevent our spiritual progress!***

1. Believers are tempted to walk *around* their Jericho's – sometimes we even justify their existence.
2. A JERICHO is anything that prevents you from possessing the inheritance God has promised you as His child.
  - What is it that hinders you from being mature and steadfast in your faith?
  - Whatever it is, IT MUST be engaged in battle before we can go on to Ai!
    - a. Maybe it is Spirit of Unfaithfulness  
—It must be engaged in battle before we can go on.
    - b. Maybe it is an Unspiritual Attitude  
—It must be engaged in battle before we can advance.
    - c. Maybe it is a Lack of Obedience  
—It must be engaged in battle before we can proceed.
    - d. Maybe it is a Failure in our Stewardship  
—It must be engaged in battle before we can progress and further.

**PRINCIPLE OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

*Submission to the Scriptures will enable us to grow into the person God wants us to be – which is basic to doing what God wants us to do.*

*On the other-hand, rebellion or disobedience to the revealed will of God results in our inability to grow and to determine God's will. Disobedience to God's Word removes from us our only reliable guide Book for life and depletes our power in handling even greater problems that will face us in the future.*

## APPLICATION

It is tempting to think that Jericho is just a little city and walk around it and go on to another?

**But — IF WE EVER EXPECT VICTORY:**

- There can be – **NO COMPROMISE.**
- There can be – **NO PEACE TREATY.**
- There can be – **NO CO-EXISTENCE** with known sin in the believer's life.

Whatever is blocking your path it must be removed and annihilated!

As God reveals it to you—REMOVE IT!

- **DON'T try to justify it** OR it will rise up and torment you!
- **DON'T think you can skirt around it**, because later, that sin you thought you could get away with, you'll find it nibbling at your rear-end.
  - **JERICHO MUST FALL! Realise it can't win—it is a defeated enemy.**
  - **Satan is a loser!** You ask "*How do I know?*" I read the last chapter! He can't get the victory in your life unless you allow him to have his Jericho's in your life!

*"For sin shall not have dominion over you ... Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"* You become the servants of righteousness when you have obeyed God from the heart! (Rom. 6:14-18).

**Now that we have seen the occupants let us see...**

## II. THE OCCUPANTS OVER-THROWN

### A. *The Canaanites never saw such tactics – they couldn't understand Israel and I would say Israel didn't understand what it was doing either! – Vs. 3-5*

1. From a military perspective, God's tactics were ridiculous! If not fantastic!
  - a. They were to be blowing trumpets while circling the city 1X for 6 days.
  - b. On the 7<sup>th</sup> day, they were to circle the city 7X, blowing trumpets and end with shouting maybe something like "*the Lord hath given us the city!*"
  - c. 7 Priests; 7 Trumpets; 7 Days; 7 Circuits around the city on the 7th day.
2. *What's the significance of 7?*
  - a. In the Bible the number 7 often symbolises perfection or completion.
  - b. God's plan was perfect, and He was going to completely destroy this city.
3. What was the significance of blaring trumpets?
  - a. **Vs. 4** the trumpets are described as ram's horns called *shophar* {sho-far'} in the Hebrew.
    - 1) In Lev. 25:9 & Num. 10:10 these instruments are shown to be "jubilee trumpets" used in the connection with Israel's solemn feasts to proclaim the presence of God and express the nation's gladness.
    - 2) Blowing the same horns used in the religious festivals in their battles would remind them that their victory would come from the Lord, not their own military might. Numbers 10:9 – "*And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.*"
  - c. The conquest of Jericho was not exclusively a military undertaking, but also a religious one. Many physical moves we make have spiritual elements to them.

- 1) Notice also that the *ark* is mentioned 10 times between **verses 4-14**.  
The ark in the **VISIBLE** symbol of God's presence
- 2) The blowing of the trumpets declared that the Lord of heaven and earth was weaving His invisible way around this doomed city.

### **B. It Was Essential That The Walls came down!**

The city of Jericho, built thousands of years before Joshua was born – one of the oldest cities in the world. The city only covered 8/9 acres – one person in 30 min could walk it around. In some places it had fortified walls up to 25 ft. high and 20 ft. thick. Soldiers standing guard on top of the walls could see for miles. Jericho was a symbol of military power and strength—the Canaanites considered it invincible.

Israel would attack this city first, and its destruction would put the fear of Israel into the heart of every person in Canaan. The Canaanites saw Israel's God as a nature god because he parted the Jordan and as a war god because he defeated Sihon and Og. But the Canaanites did not consider him a fortress god—one who could prevail against a walled city. The defeat of Jericho would show not only that Israel's God was superior to the Canaanite gods but also that he was invincible.

1. If the city was to be taken, it was imperative that the WALLS (BTW there were two and inter and out walls – they had to come down!
2. **How were they to bring down such a structure? Obviously by walk around them—how else?** How crazy this battle strategy must have appeared.
  - a. Can you not see a Jericho soldier looking down – chiding Israel as they walked around blowing their trumpets? “Boy you guys really blow a mean horn, we'll give up and surrender before you start shooting nerf balls at us.”
  - b. What was to prevent Jericho from raining arrows, rocks, or spears down on the defenceless Israelites pursuing their silent march?
  - c. What was to could stop the enemy from rushing our of the city gates to break up Israel's' line, separating and slaughtering them?
  - d. Israel didn't build any ladders, construct catapults, use battering rams, nor throw up dirt against the walls—they just marched and blew those silly rams horns.
4. No battle strategy appeared more unreasonable than this one.
  - a. Joshua, as an experienced military leader, certainly had objections flash into his mind as to this divine strategy.
  - b. BUT unlike Moses, who at the burning bush argued with lengthy eloquence against the Lord's plan (Ex. 3:11-4:17), Joshua responded with unquestioning obedience – **Vs. 6-7**.
5. Jericho couldn't understand it!  
Walking by faith and not by sight [2 Cor. 5:7] is never sensible to the world.
  - a. The world doesn't understand the way the believer fights battles  
>> **TURN 1 Cor. 1:25-31**.
  - b. The world can't comprehend the way believers can stay sweet, kind and loving in the midst of all the troubles, or during the trials and tribulations that come against us.

### **APPLICATION**

**What are the walls that need to come down in you life?** Remember these walls were spiritual conquests. **Some walls that need to come down are:** Disobedience; Fear; Unfaithfulness; Attitude; Secret Sins harboured in our souls; Wayward Habits that defeat us—ALL of these must all come down BEFORE we can move forward to higher ground in our lives.

### **C. What was the Source of Israel's Victory?**

1. Did they borrow weapons from Jericho in order to fight Jericho? —“Hey you guys, throw down some of your stuff so we can beat the stuffing out of you.” Can you imagine what they’d give them if they did? Pop-guns, rubber swords, plastic shields & spears, star wars laser swords.
2. That’s ridiculous you say! But no more wacky than for the Christian to borrow from the world’s armoury using its weapons to battle with them in an attempt to have victory in their Christian life.
3. How ludicrous is it for us to fight for our spiritual inheritance with the carnal tools and carnal weapons of this world. Paul said, *“the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds”* (2 Cor. 10:4).

**D. The Source of Our Victory is TWOFOLD, just as was Israel’s: Faith & Obedience to God!**

**1<sup>st</sup> Source of our Victory – FAITH – 6:2 – “See I have given into thy hand.”**

- a. **QUESTION?** Do we have faith in God’s ability to perform that which He promised?
- b. The Commander, the Lord Himself, promised victory. He told Joshua that Jericho was already delivered into his hands *“I have given.”* The enemy was already defeated.
  - 1) The Hebrew verb is prophetic perfect – it describes a future action as if it were already accomplished.
  - 2) What confidence Joshua must have had as he went into battle!
- c. Christians also fight against a defeated enemy. Our enemy, Satan, has been defeated by Christ (Romans 8:37-39; Hebrews 2:14, 15; 1 John 3:8).
- d. Although we still fight battles every day and sin runs rampant in the world, we have the assurance that the war has already been won. We do not have to be paralyzed by the power of a defeated enemy; we can overcome him through Christ’s power.
- e. **FAITH is:** Taking God at His Word —*Believing what God says.*
  - 1) **LOOK AT >> Josh. 6:16, 20**
  - 2) **Heb. 11:30 – “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.”**

*What was the FORCE of victory for Israel? —SURELY NOT the tools & weapons of Jericho, but faith in the God who promised to give the victory. Our victory over sin, flesh, the devil and the obtaining of spiritual maturity is acquired the same way as Israel – **By FAITH***

- God has given us the means >> **TURN 2 Peter 1:3**
- Every born-again believer can be spiritually mature, they can be *“overcomers”* – **1 John 5:4**
- God has given us the victory – **1 Cor. 15:57**. The question is: Do we have the faith and courage to claim it? This bring us to the...

**2<sup>nd</sup> Source of our Victory – OBEDIENCE**

- a. The FIRST obligation of every believer is to obey God.
- b. Israel demonstrated obedience when they followed their leader—Joshua as he obeyed and followed the Lord.
- c. All they had to do was to march – **BUT THEY DID HAVE TO MARCH!** – **6:7**
- d. For each day of the 7 days the Israelites had to trust God. Their obedience was not a “once-for-all” matter, but a **NEW CHALLENGE EACH MORNING!**
- e. Even though God has given us the victory, there are still things for us to do to realise our victory. **TURN>> Col. 3**
  1. To have victory your heart must be in it – **Vs. 1-4**

2. There will be things to “*put off!*” – Vs. 5-9
3. There will be things to “*put on!*” – Vs. 10-17
- f. Concerning the N.T. church we demonstrate our obedience when we follow our God ordained leaders. >> Heb. 13:17. In 13:7 emphasis’ is to follow their example of faith.
- g. **QUESTION?** Why did God give Joshua all these complicated instructions for the battle? Several answers are possible:
  1. God was making it undeniably clear that the battle would depend upon Him, and not upon Israel’s weapons and expertise. This is why priests carrying the Ark, not soldiers, led the Israelites into battle.
  2. God’s method of taking the city accentuated the terror already felt in Jericho (2:9).
  3. Ultimately, this strange military manoeuvre was a test of the Israelites’ faith and their willingness to follow God completely.

God’s instructions may require you to things at first that don’t make sense to you. Even as you follow Him, you may wonder how things can possibly work out. Like the Israelites, take one day at a time and follow the step by step. You may not see the logic of God’s plan until after you have obeyed.

*We have seen the occupants and their over throw, now let us look at...*

### III. OMINOUS [EVIL – OMEN] ORDERS

#### A. Joshua 6:17-19 – *Don’t take anything from the city for yourself.*

1. Why did God demand that the Israelites destroy almost everyone and everything in Jericho in vs. 21?

He was carrying out severe judgment against the wickedness of the Canaanites. This judgment, or *ban*, usually required that everything be destroyed (Deuteronomy 12:2-3; 13:12-18). Because of their evil practices and intense idolatry, the Canaanites were a stronghold of rebellion against God. This threat to the right kind of living that God required had to be removed. If not, it would affect all Israel like a cancerous growth (as it did in the sad story told in the book of Judges).

A few people and some items in Jericho were not destroyed, but these were special cases. Rahab and her household were saved because she had faith in God and because she helped the Israelite spies. The silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron were kept, not to enrich the people, but to beautify the Tabernacle and its services (6:24).

God’s purpose in all this was to keep the people’s faith and religion uncontaminated. He did not want the plunder to remind Israel of Canaanite practices.

God also wants us to be pure. He wants us to clean up our behaviour when we begin a new life with him. We must not let the desire for personal gain distract us from our spiritual purpose. We must also reject any objects that are reminders of a life of rebellion against God.

- Vs. 17 – “ACCURSED”** is the same Heb. [*cherem*] word translated “*utterly destroyed*” in vs. 21
2. In the Heb. it means things devoted to “utter destruction” —doomed objects; extermination of a devoted thing, a dedicated thing, or anything banned.
  3. The city of Jericho and everything in it was completely *devoted* to the Lord (vs. 17).
    - a. Everything was under judgement and “under the ban” for Israel as the entire city was *devoted* for the Lord.
    - b. The idea is the city’s contents were to be given over to the Lord by totally destroying them.
  4. **Vs. 19** – The contents of Jericho were “*consecrated (scared, separated) unto the Lord.*”

- a. They were to be given to the Lord as the firstfruits of the land.
  - b. Just as the first fruits of a crop given to the Lord, pointed to more crops to come, so the conquest of Jericho signified that Israel would receive all of Canaan from Him.
5. The city and its contents were to be given over to the Lord by total destruction like a burnt offering **cp. vs. 24**, therefore no loot or booty was to be taken by any individual. **To do so would result in disastrous consequences!**
  6. Items of silver, gold brass/bronze and iron were to be set apart for the Lord's treasury. *"ALL that was therein"* (vs. 24) was "devoted" either to destruction or to the house of the Lord.
  7. The Heb. word *"accursed"* (vs. 17) in the Greek is "anathema."
    - a. **1 Cor. 16:22** it is used to describe the individual who doesn't love the Lord Jesus Christ. *"If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha"* (banned, excommunicated, accursed at our Lord's coming).
    - b. **SEE >> Gal. 1:9** describes one who is "set apart for destruction" is the promoter of a false Gospel.

**B. Joshua 6:26 – Gives another "Ominous Order" – After the walls fell flat vs. 20 they were instructed,**

**DON'T REBUILD THE CITY!**

1. WARNING – 1<sup>st</sup> born (oldest) will die at the laying of the foundation.
2. WARNING – Youngest son will be lost when the gates are put up.
3. 500 yrs. later, during the reign of apostate King Ahab this curse was experienced. **TURN >> 1 Kings 16:33-34**
4. Jericho was to remain in ruins as monument to its miraculous overthrow by the true God.
5. Jericho (inhabited 7000 B.C.) was one of the oldest cities in the world. Its fall pre-figures the destruction of the world system in the end of the age (Rev. 6:1-19:16).

**D. There is also a penalty to be paid by every believer who goes back and rebuilds the spiritual Jericho's he throws down.**

- What are the Jericho's that have been defeated in your life?
- What are the victories that have been won?
- What are the high points in your life where God had cast out the enemy, when you were in obedience to Him, BUT NOW have turned back and picked up that accursed thing again?

**Just like the Hiel in 1 Kings 16,**

**it will cost you something very dear if you have picked up the accused thing!**

1. It will **COST** you in personal chastening.
2. It **COSTS** you in your hurt to others – backsliding parent will bring the effects of his sin on his family.
3. Ultimately, rebuilding Jericho means you go back to the world & away from God.
4. Whatever those Jericho's were in the past — the ones you allowed to be re-built:
  - **Tear** them down immediately!
  - **Engage** the enemy with the confidence the victory is yours.
  - **Utterly** destroy the Jericho's and pledge before God TODAY to leave them in ruins and go on and claim the land of milk and honey that God says is yours.



#### IV. THE OBEDIENT OCCUPANT RAHAB – 6:22-25

##### A. *Scarlet Thread*

1. **She was an OBJECT OF RIDICULE** – areas of prostitution today are known as the red light district.
2. **She was an OBJECT OF REDEMPTION** – by faith she was trusting in the testimony of God's people about God's grace. The red cord symbolises for us the blood of our Lord.

##### B. *Rahab was Spared*

1. By placing the thread of cloth out the window, she confessed of her sinfulness, identifying with her wickedness and her need of God's grace for that is the ONLY way she was gonna be spared!
2. Her decision to believe and trust in Israel's God resulted not only in her salvation, but also in that of her loved ones that she convinced to also trust in the Lord.

**NOTE 6:27** – The secret to Joshua's success at Jericho was not due to his military genius or skill in warfare. Victory came because he and the people fully trusted in God's ability and obeyed His Word.

#### CLOSE – PRAYER

Are there Jericho's in your path? It only takes faith in the God who promises to remove them to get the victory — all you have to do is obey Him AND get up and walk around the walls — He'll cause them to fall – you have His Word on it!

Have you dared to return to a defeated foe and allow him to re-build a Jericho in your life? God wants you to re-claim the victory He has given you.

Are you the doomed in Jericho, devoted to destruction? God wants you by faith to wave the *scarlet threaded cloth* of redeeming grace in Christ's blood and declare that you believe.

19 May '91 – Lifegate B.C. – Dublin  
 Sun, Oct 13, 1991 – Calvary B.F., Cork  
 13 Sept. '02 – River Valley BC – Leixlip, Co. Kildare  
 10-May-2009 Eve– River Valley BC – Leixlip, Co. Kildare  
 6 June '14, Eve– River Valley BC – Leixlip, Co. Kildare